

The Man Who Wasn't Himself

By
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BENNET

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"YOUR FIANCEE WAITS."

SYNOPSIS.—Alighting from a train at Denver a well-dressed traveler is familiarly accosted by a man about his own age. The traveler ignores the advance. A few minutes later he is greeted as "Will" by an elderly lady and gentleman, who stop their auto to speak. He imagines it a case of mistaken identity and announces himself as "Richard Clinton," on his way to the coast. The couple appear greatly surprised, and learning he is to be in town until midnight, the lady, introducing herself as Mrs. Kirkland, and her husband as Doctor Kirkland, invites him to dinner, explaining the action by his striking resemblance to a friend of theirs. He accepts. At the Kirkland home he meets a young lady who greets him as her fiancée. She is Ellen Kirkland, and plainly is greatly hurt by his assertion that he is "Richard Clinton." At dinner "Clinton" learns that his host is a medical specialist and that he is believed to be Will Lowrie, a young man who had been suffering from a nervous breakdown and had gone east for medical treatment. Lowrie had had in his possession bonds of the value of \$100,000, belonging to the bank where he was employed, which have disappeared and of which he has no recollection. With Doctor Kirkland "Clinton" goes to the Lowrie home, the doctor being satisfied that Amy Lowrie, Will's sister, will convince "Clinton" he is really Lowrie, suffering from loss of memory. Amy declares at once he is her brother, and insists on treating him as such, to his great embarrassment. Doctor Kirkland sends a telegram to the sanitarium where Lowrie is undergoing treatment. Ellen and Amy try in vain to convince "Clinton" he is Will Lowrie.

CHAPTER IV—Continued.

"Stay? You mean stay here and rob me of my trip?" pouted the girl.

"Very sensibly!" exclaimed Mrs. Kirkland.

"Unless you drive me mad!" qualified Clinton. "I shall stay in Denver, but on condition that Doctor Kirkland shall at once telegraph to inquire about Mr. Lowrie."

"The telegram shall be sent to-night," said Doctor Kirkland. "No doubt we shall hear from the sanitarium some time tomorrow."

"Very well. I suppose I can keep sane that long. May I ask you to send telegrams for me to— No, that will not be necessary. The answer to your telegram will prove that I cannot be Mr. Lowrie."

"Mr. Lowrie!" chuckled Bemm.

Clinton flushed and almost snatched out a wallet, which he opened so hurriedly that the contents fell from it. Among them was a bank draft and a yard-long railroad ticket. As he caught these from his lap to hand to Doctor Kirkland Bemm stooped to pick up the baggage check that had fallen on the floor. With them lay a numbered brass piece such as is given out as a receipt at checking counters.

When Bemm handed Clinton the paper baggage check the metal check was not with them nor was it on the rug. The owner did not notice its absence. He was pointing to the name on the ticket and draft.

"There is clear proof of my identity," he said. "Stupid of me not to have thought of it before. Draft drawn in my favor; my signature on the ticket."

Bemm glanced at the signature and said a trifle sharply: "That's not your writing."

"You mean it is not Will Lowrie's," corrected Clinton. "It is my name, 'Richard Clinton,' and my signature."

"One of the results of dissociation is a change of handwriting," observed Doctor Kirkland in his most cocksure tone.

"There is the bank draft," argued Clinton. "It is drawn on San Francisco. I shall cash it tomorrow."

Bemm shot a quick glance at the physician and lightly remarked: "You'll need to be identified. I'll be glad to introduce you to your bank."

"Mine?"

"Your other self's bank," chuckled Bemm.

"As Will Lowrie, you know, you were confidential agent and broker of the Fourth National," explained Doctor Kirkland. "Charlie and I have our accounts there, so it will be less awkward for you to present your draft

where he and I can explain the situation."

"Explain!" muttered Clinton. "Well, I suppose I must make the best of it. Now if you'll kindly give me your office card and the address of the bank and direct me to the nearest hotel."

"Listen to him!" cried Amy. "Hotel!—when he's at home! That comes of traveling for months."

"Miss Lowrie," he gravely replied, "your mother is away. I can no more stay here than I could have agreed to your traveling alone with me."

"Isn't he the silliest!"

"I mean it."

"Mamma, what if Amy should ask us to stay tonight?" suggested Ellen.

Clinton looked about him with the alarm of the bird under the descending net of the fowler. "Mrs. Kirkland, I must beg you—" he protested.

The lady smiled reassuringly. "Ellen has solved the difficulty. We may call it a house party, and you a guest as well as she and I."

"Leaving me out of it," complained Bemm. "Why shouldn't he put up at my lodgings for the night?"

"Just the thing," agreed Clinton. "Very good of you, Mr. Bemm. It will—will save Miss Lowrie the trouble of—"

"Botheration!" exclaimed Amy. "If Charlie takes you away he need never show his face here again. Besides he's not going to, because you're going to stay home."

"That settles it," declared Doctor Kirkland. "When Toodums puts her foot down— Come, Charlie. Good night, my dear. Girls, don't let him escape you."

"Don't worry," replied Amy. "Ellen and I shall treat him so nice that he won't want to leave."

"I'd be glad to stay even if you beat me," suggested Bemm.

"That would make it quite a house party," observed Ellen with a wistful glance at Clinton.

Amy laughed outright. "She and Charlie are going into horticulture. They think two peaches will make two pairs, if provided with the correct accessories."

"Is there a man in town more correct than yours most devotedly?" queried Bemm.

"The only gentlemen invited to this house party are brothers," bantered the little hostess. "Do join us!"

"Thanks, no! Good evening, everybody. Meet you at the bank, Will," Bemm covered his hasty retreat. "I'm coming, doctor. Leave the door open."

Ever Clinton smiled at the precipitate flight of the young elegant.

"Trust Tillie to have his room all ready," said Amy. "I'll put him to bed right away. Come, brotherkins, else the sandman will catch you. It's time you toddled off to slumberland."

Clinton looked to Mrs. Kirkland for succor. The lady smiled and graciously wished him, "Pleasant dreams!"

"Good night!" murmured Ellen. She impulsively rose and started toward him, only to stop in sudden remembrance and stand blushing between dismay and half-hearted expectancy.

"Good night!—excuse me—good night!" he stammered, and he hurried out past Amy into the hall.

She darted after him, but did not overtake him until he paused in the upper hall before the door of a deliciously dainty pink and ivory boudoir. She placed a caressing hand on his shoulder when, at the sight of the feminine furnishings of the room, he would have stepped back.

"Aren't you going to tell me how much prettier it is than it was?" she reproached.

"You forget this is the first time I ever— It is very pretty, though. Far too exquisite for a man."

"Horror!" she cried. "You must be half asleep. Go on to your own room."

He looked at the closed doors of the other rooms as if in doubt. She cut short his hesitation by leading him to the end of the hall and into a large, simply furnished bedroom.

"Didn't I tell you?" she said. "Tillie has everything neat as a pin."

She darted ahead into a closet and came out with an armful of garments. "Yes, Tillie has hung up your lounging robe and pajamas. Here they are. You'll want a good hot bath after your trip; and there's Ellen and her mamma—so I'll not stop to talk. Good night."

"Good night," he replied, trying to avoid her affectionate gaze.

"We must not keep them waiting," she said, upturning her Cupid's bow lips to him.

To have altogether refused that invitation would have been an impossibility. He caught her small hand between his hands and bent down to kiss her forehead. "Little sister—little sister!" he half-whispered. "Now go, please go!"

"Will!" she ecstatically gasped. "You do—do remember me!"

"No, it's not that," he hastened to curb her joy. "Please go at once."

She went out dejected. He bolted the door and looked about the room with an abstracted gaze. The almost ascetic simplicity of the decorations and furniture gave marked prominence to the two large photographs on the dresser. The young man went across to study the faces that the photographer had represented with un-

usual fidelity. Though so dissimilar they were alike in being lovely.

He smiled whimsically and murmured: "Two darlings—my fiancée and my little—sister!"

CHAPTER V.

Early Birds.

At sunrise Clinton was awakened by the dazzling rays that streamed in at his open window.

He hastened to where he had left his clothes. They were arranged in a different manner from that in which he left them—they had an odd look—the suit was not his own. Though not unlike in color, the pattern and texture were dissimilar. On the dresser lay all the articles that had been in his suit except the handkerchiefs. Fresh linen and underwear were laid out in the place of what he had worn. His shoes set where he had left them, but they had been carefully polished. It was easy to divine that while he slept someone had come into the room through the rear door or the passage that led to the bathroom.

Accustomed to hotels, he glanced along the walls in search of a bell push button. On the side near the rear was a round contrivance. He went over and recognized it as the mouthpiece of an old-fashioned speaking tube. He stooped to it and called irritably: "Hello, hello. Is this the kitchen? Hello—"

"Yes, yes, I'm here, Mr. Will," came back the voice of old Tillie. "My! but it does sound natural to hear you ginning me up—"

"It's my clothes," broke in Clinton. "I want my suit."

"Suit?" was the astonished reply. "Why, I laid out the very best everyday one you left."

"No, no. I mean my own suit; the one I wore last evening."

"That? But you can't have it until I get the pants pressed and the coat cleaned. There's a grease spot 'most as big as—"

Clinton slammed down the cover of the mouthpiece and returned to glower at the changeling suit. But he did not long remain inactive. Up through the open window floated a clear, sweet hail: "O-ho-o! O-ho-o, lazybones! Aren't you coming down?"

He leaped into the fresh costume and dashed to the bathroom without stopping to examine the fit of the garments. That he was able to get into them at all was sufficient to satisfy him for the time being. With hair half brushed he hurried out into the hall, fastening his tie.

"You are?" she incredulously questioned. "Well, if you mean it—"

"How could I help it when you called me?" he asked.

"But I know how much you like to lie abed. If it wasn't for these dirty old gloves I'd give you a big hug for it."

He looked quickly aside and replied in a tone of brotherly banter: "Like the Mikado, you make the punishment fit the crime."

"Meanie!" she pouted. "You wouldn't say that if Ellen offered to hug you."

"How do you know? Anyway, I mean precisely—"

He stopped short and pointed at the spots on her big apron where she had knelt in the damp soil. "You've been working hard."

"The early bird has been catching the worm. . . . Those nasty cutworms!" she complained. "I catch them and give them to Teddy Jones for his fishing. Poor things! It's too bad they have to be such a nuisance. Come and see the roses."

To avoid bruising the flowers that drooped and thrust out over the path on either side he had to walk behind her. She danced ahead of him, rapturously calling his attention to her especial favorites among the blossoms. He agreed with all her praises, evidently willing to accept her judgment, since he never shifted his gaze away from her dainty head and graceful, girlish form. She had on a crispingham dress, and her abundant hair hung down her straight little back in a thick braid. There was excuse for even a brother to consider her adorable, particularly a brother who could not realize that she was his sister.

She glanced about and caught his rapt expression. "Oh, Will, what is it?" she asked. "You look so—so as if you've been moonstruck!"

"I am trying to compose a poem," he said. "How is this?"

"The Princess of Posies,
Amidst her bright roses,
Alas! me suppose
Her brother to be!"

"No wonder you look daft, if that is the way you feel," she remarked. "Maybe so much beauty on an empty stomach has upset you."

"It is not the lack of breakfast," he asserted.

"Well, then— Oh! there's Ellen coming out of the pergola."

He colored and looked toward Ellen, who was eagerly approaching. As he caught her gaze his flush deepened.

"We're waiting for you, dear," said Amy.

"Really?" breathlessly murmured Ellen.

Amy tugged at Clinton's arm. "Don't be a dummy. Speak to her."

He bowed hastily to the other girl in a futile attempt to avoid her tender

gaze. "Pardon me, Miss Kirkland."

"Miss Kirkland!—the ideal!"—admired Amy, and she sang meaningfully:

"The maiden's standing by, sir,
'Tis yours to do or die, sir."

"Amy!" murmured the stately Miss Kirkland, her cheeks scarlet with blissful shame.

"My lord, your fiancée waits," announced the little tease.

Clinton drew back, stiff with embarrassment. "Miss—Lowrie," he replied, "you and Miss Kirkland alike forget that I am not—"

"Please, please, Will!" broke in Ellen. "Do not say that—do not!"

"He only means not himself," suggested Amy. She smiled at the young man hopefully. "Perhaps you might remember, if you made believe. Don't mind me. I'll turn my back."

The young man gave over the unequal contest. "Have it your own way, if you must; only please remember and spare me when Doctor Kirkland receives the answering telegram with regard to Mr. Lowrie."

"When you know and must believe that you are you!" sighed Ellen.

"But we won't starve you while you wait," added Amy. "Come in to breakfast. I smell bacon!"

Breakfast at Amy Lowrie's usual hour was far too early for Mrs. Kirkland. Clinton remained at the mercy of the young ladies. But he was quite submissive. He drank his cup of near-coffee without protest, and even went so far as to ask the dainty server for a second cup. In return the girls limited their demonstrations of affection to tender glances.

After the meal he at once excused himself on the plea of letter writing and withdrew to his room. He did not come out until midmorning, when, as had been agreed, Doctor Kirkland called to take him down to the bank.

"Good morning, sir," he returned the physician's cordial greeting. "May I ask if you have telegraphed for news of Mr. Lowrie?"

"The message was sent last night."

"Then you will probably receive the reply this morning?"

"Not nearly so soon—no. We shall hear not later than this evening, however."

Clinton looked gravely at Amy. "In that event please do not expect me for lunch. I shall wait until the telegram comes and you know I am not your brother. After that, if I may have the privilege—"

"What if the telegram is delayed until tomorrow?" she objected. "You promised to stay. You must come home for dinner at least, else we shall be frightened."

"Very well."

He bowed, and before Ellen or her mother could speak he was out of the room.

A drive of a few minutes brought the car down to that solid and conservative bank, the Fourth National of Denver. As Clinton followed Doctor Kirkland in through the screen door an outthrusting business man paused to clap him on the shoulder and tell him no had come home looking fine and fit. Clinton nodded and passed on into the bank.

The hawk-eyed guard, who was wandering about through the crowd, glanced at him and bowed. Again he nodded. On all sides men were recognizing him by smiles and nods. Some would have detained him with words of welcome and inquiries as to his long holiday. Doctor Kirkland saved him from the embarrassment of coherent answers by leading him briskly across to the desk of the cashier.

Bemm, as fastidiously dressed as ever, was sitting within the inclosure. At sight of Clinton he sprang to open the gate, with a cordial: "Ah, here you are! Come right in. You, too, Doctor Kirkland."

"Must go back to my office," replied the physician. "Can stop only to endorse Mr. Clinton's draft if that is necessary."

"Not at all," said Bemm. "I've explained Mr. Clinton's odd resemblance to Mr. Lowrie. The draft will be cashed all right."

Clinton drew out his draft and indorsed it under the sharp gaze of the cashier without the slightest trace of hesitancy.

The cashier glanced at the ticket, handed it back to him, and turned to another customer. "The money will be sent in to you," he said in a brusque tone.

"That clinches it. He certainly is Will Lowrie."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Giant Snail of Africa.
A valuable addition made recently to one of London's foremost zoos was a collection of giant snails, many of them measuring as much as eight inches. These snails came from East Africa, and had they remained longer they probably would have been eaten by the natives. Both the snail and its egg are considered delicacies in that far-off land. The egg is so large it is often mistaken for a pigeon's egg.

Rosy Cheeks & Satin Skin

Because of her rosy cheeks and satin skin a woman attracts the admiration of all men. When the

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peers in her

glass, she may

see pimples

and blotches

and she im-

mediately goes

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ders and beauty creams, when she

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